

Amendments to the Claims:

Please **cancel** Claims 6 and 7 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please **amend** Claims 1, 5, and 8; and **add** Claims 9 through 14 to read, as follows.

1. **(Currently Amended)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus having:
  - a developing device for developing an electrostatic image formed on an image bearing member by a toner, said developing device being provided on and movable with respect for movement relative to an apparatus main body;
  - a sensor for outputting information corresponding to a toner residual amount in said developing device;
  - judging means for comparing an ~~[[the]]~~ output of said sensor with a reference value to thereby judge a ~~[[the]]~~ toner residual amount, ~~amount~~;
  - wherein said judging means judges that the toner residual amount is insufficient when a number of times that the output of said sensor is less than the reference value within a predetermined detection time exceeds a reference number of times, and
  - wherein image forming is inhibited after ~~[[via]]~~ a predetermined number ~~member~~ of times of image forming after the toner residual amount is judged to be insufficient; ~~not sufficient~~; and
  - changing means for changing the reference number of times ~~value~~ to a smaller value when it is judged with the judgement that the toner residual amount is insufficient. ~~not sufficient~~.

2. **(Original)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said developing device is provided detachably from the apparatus main body.

3. **(Original)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein said sensor is provided in said developing device.

4. **(Currently Amended)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said sensor includes ~~[[has]]~~ an electrically conductive member disposed in opposed relationship with a toner carrying member provided in said developing device for outputting a signal conforming to the toner residual amount with ~~[[the]]~~ application of a developing bias to said toner carrying member.

5. **(Currently Amended)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein when ~~in a state in which~~ the toner residual amount is judged to be insufficient, ~~judged to be not sufficient, the output of said sensor exceeds the smaller reference value, the smaller value is changed to the reference number of times, if the number of times that the output of said sensor is less than the reference value within the predetermined detection time falls below the smaller value. said changing means changes it to the original reference value.~~

6. **(Canceled)**

7. **(Canceled)**

8. **(Currently Amended)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein said changing means changes the reference number of times to value to the smaller value so that it is not misjudged that the toner residual amount is ~~may~~ ~~not be erroneously judged to be~~ sufficient.

--9. **(New)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus having:

a developing device for developing an electrostatic image formed on an image bearing member by a toner, said developing device being provided on and movable with respect to an apparatus main body;

a sensor for outputting information corresponding to a toner residual amount in said developing device;

judging means for comparing an output of said sensor with a reference value to thereby judge a toner residual amount,

wherein said judging means judges that the toner residual amount is insufficient when a rate with respect to an output from said sensor is less than the reference value exceeds a reference rate value, and

wherein image forming is inhibited after a predetermined number of times of image forming after the toner residual amount is judged to be insufficient; and

changing means for changing the reference rate value to a smaller value when it is judged that the toner residual amount is insufficient.

10. **(New)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 9, wherein said developing device is provided detachably from the apparatus main body.

11. **(New)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 9 or 10, wherein said sensor is provided in said developing device.

12. **(New)** A toner residual amount detecting apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein said sensor includes an electrically conductive member disposed in opposed relationship with a toner carrying member provided in said developing device for outputting a signal conforming to the toner residual amount with application of a developing bias to said toner carrying member.

13. **(New)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 9 or 10, wherein when the toner residual amount is judged to be insufficient, the smaller value is changed to the reference rate value, if the rate with respect to the predetermined detection time of the integrated time that the output of said sensor is less than the reference value falls below the smaller value.

14. **(New)** A toner residual amount detection apparatus according to Claim 9 or 10, wherein said changing means changes the reference rate value to the smaller value so that it is not misjudged that the toner residual amount is sufficient.--